

What is Claimed is:

1. A terminal apparatus into which any one of a first and a second memory card is selectively inserted, said first memory card carrying a signal processing circuit for copyright protection, said second memory card not carrying a signal processing circuit for copyright protection, said terminal apparatus comprising:

compression processing means for applying a second compression process to an input first compressed signal having undergone a first compression process, said second compression process being inferior to said first compression process in terms of compression efficiency;

selecting means for selecting either said first compressed signal having undergone said first compression process, or a second compressed signal furnished by said compression processing means;

judging means for judging whether a memory card inserted into said terminal apparatus is said first memory card or said second memory card;

controlling means for controlling said selecting means in accordance with a judgment made by said judging means; and

recording means for recording the compressed signal selected by said controlling means to the inserted memory

card.

2. A terminal apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said first compression process is an adaptive transform acoustic coding process known as ATRAC and said second compression process is an adaptive differential pulse code modulation process known as ADPCM.

3. A terminal apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said first compression process is superior to said second compression process in terms of compression efficiency.

4. A terminal apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein said first memory card and said second memory
card are substantially the same in shape.

5. A terminal apparatus according to claim 1, wherein contents to be recorded which are subject to copyright protection include music, videos and games provided by copyright holders.

6. A terminal apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, if said inserted memory card is judged by said judging means to be said first memory card, then said controlling means selects said first compressed signal and records the selected signal to the inserted first memory card.

7. A terminal apparatus according to claim 1,

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wherein, if said inserted memory card is judged by said judging means to be said second memory card, then said controlling means selects said second compressed signal and records the selected signal to the inserted second memory card.

8. A terminal apparatus into which any one of a first and a second memory card is selectively inserted, said first memory card carrying a signal processing circuit for copyright protection, said second memory card not carrying a signal processing circuit for copyright protection, said terminal apparatus comprising:

a first input terminal through which to input an analog audio signal picked up by a microphone;

a second input terminal through which to input a digital audio compressed signal having undergone a first compression process;

decompressing means for decompressing the digital audio compressed signal input through said second input terminal;

D/A converting means for converting a decompressed digital audio signal from said decompressing means into an analog audio signal;

first switching means for selecting either an analog audio signal which, having being picked up by said

compressed signal selected by said second switching means to the inserted memory card.

9. A terminal apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising mode operating means for selectively setting either a microphone input mode in which the analog audio signal input from said microphone is recorded to said inserted memory card, or a line input mode in which the digital audio compressed signal having undergone said first compression process and input through said second input terminal is recorded to said inserted memory card;

wherein, if said mode operating means selects said microphone input mode, then said controlling means causes said first switching means to select the analog audio signal picked up by said microphone and input through said first input terminal, and causes said second switching means to select the digital audio compressed signal having undergone said second compression process and output from said compression processing means.

10. A terminal apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising mode operating means for selectively setting either a microphone input mode in which the analog audio signal input from said microphone is recorded to said inserted memory card, or a line input

mode in which the digital audio compressed signal having undergone said first compression process and input through said second input terminal is recorded to said inserted memory card;

wherein, if said mode operating means selects said line input mode and if said judging means judges said inserted memory card to be said first memory card, then said controlling means causes the digital audio compressed signal having undergone said first compression process and input through said second input terminal to be selected.

11. A terminal apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising mode operating means for selectively setting either a microphone input mode in which the analog audio signal input from said microphone is recorded to said inserted memory card, or a line input mode in which the digital audio compressed signal having undergone said first compression process and input through said second input terminal is recorded to said inserted memory card;

wherein, if said mode operating means selects said line input mode and if said judging means judges said inserted memory card to be said second memory card, then said controlling means causes said second switching means

to select the digital audio compressed signal having undergone said second compression process and output from said compression processing means.

12. A terminal apparatus into which any one of a first and a second memory card is selectively inserted, said first memory card carrying a signal processing circuit for copyright protection, said second memory card not carrying a signal processing circuit for copyright protection, said terminal apparatus comprising:

converting means for converting an m-channel audio signal, m being an integer of at least 2, into an n-channel audio signal, n being a positive integer not greater than m;

selecting means for selecting either an input m-channel audio signal or the converted n-channel audio signal from said converting means;

judging means for judging whether a memory card inserted into said terminal apparatus is said first memory card or said second memory card;

controlling means for controlling said selecting means in accordance with a judgment made by said judging means; and

recording means for recording the audio signal selected by said controlling means to the inserted memory

card.

13. A terminal apparatus according to claim 12,
wherein said first memory card and said second memory
card are substantially the same in shape.

15. A terminal apparatus according to claim 12, wherein, if said inserted memory card is judged by said judging means to be said first memory card, then said controlling means selects said m-channel audio signal and records the selected signal to the inserted first memory card.

17. A terminal apparatus into which any one of a first and a second memory card is selectively inserted, said first memory card carrying a signal processing circuit for copyright protection, said second memory card

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not carrying a signal processing circuit for copyright protection, said terminal apparatus comprising:

microphone inputting means for inputting an analog audio signal picked up by a microphone;

converting means for converting a line input m-channel digital audio signal, m being an integer of at least 2, into an n-channel digital audio signal, n being a positive integer not greater than m;

selecting means for selecting either the line input m-channel digital audio signal or the converted n-channel digital audio signal from said converting means;

operating means for setting either a digital audio signal recording mode in which to record said line input m-channel digital audio signal, or an analog audio signal recording mode in which to record said analog audio signal input by said microphone inputting means;

judging means for judging whether a memory card inserted into said terminal apparatus is said first memory card or said second memory card;

controlling means for controlling said selecting means in accordance with a judgment made by said judging means and with the mode set by said operating means; and

recording means for recording the audio signal selected by said controlling means to the inserted memory

card.

18. A terminal apparatus according to claim 17, wherein, if said operating means selects the digital audio signal recording mode in which to record said line input m-channel digital audio signal and if said judging means judges said inserted memory card to be said first memory card, then said controlling means causes said line input m-channel digital audio signal to be selected.

19. A terminal apparatus according to claim 17, wherein, if said operating means selects the digital audio signal recording mode in which to record said line input m-channel digital audio signal and if said judging means judges said inserted memory card to be said second memory card, then said controlling means causes said n-channel digital audio signal output from said converting means to be selected.